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NOTES FROM THE MEDICAL PRESS

IN CHARGE OF

ELISABETH ROBINSON SCOVIL

SUBLINGUAL MEDICATION.—In an article in the *Medical Record*, Dr. Beverly Robinson emphatically recommends sublingual medication in cases of emergency where it is difficult or impossible to administer the drug hypodermically. A hypodermic tablet is powdered on paper with a pen knife and poured behind the front teeth, under the tongue. In a few moments it is completely dissolved and absorbed and the constitutional effect of the drug is immediate. If there is great pain it is almost magically relieved. In heart failure the circulation may be completely restored when hope is lost. It can be given thus when the patient is unconscious. The mucous membrane in this region is very thin and full of vessels, and rapid absorption is certain.

ADMINISTRATION OF QUININE.—A writer in the *Indian Medical Gazette* says that one five-grain fresh tablet of quinine sulphate taken every day at 5 p. m. will prevent an attack of malaria.

TREATING OF FEET AND AXILLAE.—The *Journal of the American Medical Association* says that excessive perspiration of the feet and the skin of the arm pits is frequently difficult to control satisfactorily. Besides keeping the parts properly bathed and cool, attention should be given to the clothing and shoes. Rubber soled shoes are objectionable and impenetrable dress shields should be discarded. A recent efficient remedy is a 25 per cent solution of aluminum chloride in distilled water, dabbed gently on the part every second or third day and allowed to dry. Three applications are usually sufficient. If the condition recurs, the treatment may be repeated. In some cases it may cause a mild dermatitis, perhaps with itching. Protect from scratching and apply cold cream containing 12 per cent of boric acid, or a calamine lotion. Pure glycerine rubbed on the feet sometimes stops offensive sweating. A 2 per cent solution of the official liquor formaldehyde to the axillae and 5 per cent to the feet is useful. Five parts in 1000 of potassium permanganate is recommended as a wash for the feet.

TO FIGHT PNEUMONIA.—The *Bulletin* of the Maryland Health Department announces that lobar pneumonia being a communicable disease, means to control it will be enforced; a modified form of the restrictions applicable to diphtheria, scarlet fever, etc., will be used. Race is a factor in the death rate of pneumonia. It is low amongst Germans, Russians and Hungarians in New York City and particularly high amongst Italian children, three and a half times that of the

offspring of German mothers and double that of children of American mothers. The Irish and negro races seem peculiarly susceptible.

OILED GAUZE FOR DRESSINGS.—A French medical journal states that oiled tulle is preferable to ordinary gauze as a dressing for wounds, as it does not stick to them. It is impregnated with a mixture of two parts of petrolatum to two parts of castor oil and one part yellow wax. A little Peruvian balsam gives a pleasant odor, but is not otherwise necessary.

VALUE OF FACE MASKS IN CONTAGIOUS DISEASE.—A writer in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* relates the experience of a hospital in which patients with a variety of contagious diseases were cared for, in the use of face masks. These were worn by physicians and nurses and consisted of a double thickness of gauze, so shaped as to fit closely over the face from the chin well over the nose, and held in place by two tapes tied behind the head. A mask is never worn a second time until sterilized and washed, and is changed when evidently contaminated or when it becomes moist. The attacks of rhinitis, pharyngitis and tonsillitis that were relatively frequent before the masks were used, have almost disappeared. They were also used with success in caring for fourteen epidemic meningitis patients. They seem to be especially efficacious in preventing infection in diphtheria and scarlet fever.

ANESTHETISTS NEED NOT BE PHYSICIANS.—The attorney general of Wisconsin has given it as his opinion that "The giving of an anesthetic under the direction of a physician does not require the anesthetist to hold a medical license, and this practice is therefore not to be considered as a violation of the statute."

IODINE IN PHTHISIS.—The *Medical Press* in commenting upon investigations made at the Rockefeller Institute says that the tubercle bacilli contain a substance of the nature of a lipoid, that is which cannot be dissolved in water, to which is attributed the lack of autolysis, or self-destruction of the tubercular germ. Iodine counteracts this lipoid element and increases phagocytosis, implying the destruction of the germ. The author concludes that these observations justify the treatment of phthisis by the intravenous injection of iodoform dissolved in ether, which he claims to have employed with unvarying success for six years.

THE HALIFAX DISASTER.—One of the most painful aspects of the terrible disaster at Halifax is the large number of persons wholly or partially blinded by broken glass. Nearly every pane in the city was splintered by the force of the explosion and as many persons, startled by the first explosion, were looking out of the windows, they received

the full force of the impact. The number thus injured has been variously estimated and is probably in the neighborhood of 400.

PASTEURIZED MILK IN RELATION TO SCURVY.—A writer in the *Medical Record* believes that pasteurization, properly performed, does not destroy the enzymes of the vitamins to any appreciable extent. When scorbutic conditions develop they are probably due to other causes than the food. A boiling heat does not destroy the vitamin principle, or nutritive element, in other alimentary substances. Orange juice is of value as an anti-scorbutic food. Milk modified by barley or oatmeal gruel before the heating of the milk is recommended as of digestive advantage.

HOSPITALS ON ITALIAN WAR FRONTS.—The foreign letter of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* contains an interesting account of some of the Italian hospitals at the front. One was 30 or 40 feet underground, at a point at which during the time of the visit a battle was raging. There were good operating rooms supplied with artificial ventilation and modern hospital furniture. Another was in the Dolomites, at an elevation of 6000 feet; it had a capacity of 30 beds. The two sides and back wall were of stone, and the mountain range at this point was so narrow that through a hole bored in the back wall of the hospital it was possible to look into the Austrian trenches on the other side of the mountain. The wounded who were able to travel after receiving emergency treatment were sent to the rail head by the marvelous teleferica, or overhead wire railways, which often go from mountain top to mountain top, over chasms thousands of feet deep. They also have mobile hospitals of 100-bed capacity, which can be taken down, transferred 75 miles, set up again, and put in service within 24 hours, the entire equipment being transported on five motor trucks and three touring cars.

RED HAIR.—The *Medical Record* in an article on this subject says it has been stated by an Edinburgh physician that red-haired people are less liable by far to insanity than are other human beings. Sir W. Arbuthnot Lane also holds that persons with red hair are much more resistant to disease than the generality of people and that a disease becomes less virulent in type when it gains entrance into the body of a red-haired person than when it attacks a person with hair of a more modest color. Perhaps those with red hair are more generally distinguished, as a rule, by physical vigor than by the possession of exceptional mental powers. Still, the poet Swinburne was blessed with a cranial covering of this particular color.